

### Good Stories for Children

By Walt McDougall



He Also Falls in With a

Wonderful Cuckoo.

Who is So Learned

That He Teaches the Boy Everything in the

World That is Worth

Knowing, and Enables

Him to Frustrate His

Bitter Enemies. Who

Are Conspiring to Do

# REUBEN MOSSBACH BLOWS UP THE WAMGOOZLE WITH FIRE-CRACKERS

The Story of a Ten-Dollar Gold Piece Which by Some Magic Renewed Itself Every Time It Was Spent, and Made Its Owner Independent of All Cares—It Was the Reward for Saving the Life of a Shipwrecked Sea Captain



"HAVE YOU COME TO TAKE ME ASHORE?"

last of his race.

The poor old man had suffered too much, how-

ever, and in a few days it was quite plain that

he would die from exposure and shock He lay in

his bed, and when he was sure that the end was

"My good lad, you are the only one to whom I

owe any thanks, and I am going to leave you all I have. There is a little money in my bag, and

among the coins you will find a ten-dollar gold

piece, which has one wonderful quality. No mat-

ter how often you may spend it, it will always

come back to you at night, so that you will never be a day without money. I have found that it is quite a fortune in itself, provided that

one never wants to buy any more than ten dollars' worth at a time. If you do, you will have to save up your change from the coin from day to day until you have enough, but that will be no hardship, as I

have found. You will take good care of the old cuckoo clock, although I suppose you needn't guard it as carefully as I and my fathers did, as now it is going out of my family. I wish I could inform you as

to the reason we always were told to treasure it, but I cannot. So now good-bye and drop a tear once in a while for old Lemuel Mozinsky, the

They buried Mr. Mozinsky that week, and then Reub went and spent his gold piece. He bought some things that he needed and some for Em-

his gold plece. He bought some things that he needed and some for Emmaline and his mother, and had four dollars left. That night he found the coin in h.; pocket once more and was much surprised, for he had not really believed it was possible, being one of those boys who do not believe in fairy tales. So now he are sure that he could afford to travel and see all the strange countries he wishel to see, and he was happy. But one thing worried him. He was forever pondering as to why old Mozinsky's family had treasured the antique and useless clock which he had hung up in his bedroom, where it remained silent all day long. The weights which worked it were gone, and he supposed that those inside were also useless, but one day he took it down and pried open the little.

were also useless, but one day he took it down and pried open the little door out of which the cuckoo usually pops every hour, for he wanted to learn just how much the clock lacked. As soon as the door was opened he saw within the bird, but instead of it being made of wood, as every

clock cuckoo is, this was a real bird, lying there with its eyes wide open and as bright as diamonds. Reuben was startled at the sight and

almost dropped the clock. Then the bird spoke in a voice unlike those of clock cuckoos, and said:

"Well, I have been waiting for some one to have sense enough to

open the clock-waiting for more than ninety-two years. I am glad it has at last gotten out of the Mozinsky family, for I am dreadfully tired of keeping silent all these years."

first Mozinsky who had me used to consult me constantly, but he ne-glected to inform his son of that fact, and so when he died the secret was

The Cuckoo Tells How to Reach Him

little knob beneath the door it will open and you can talk with me.

will tell you whatever you wish to know, no matter what it is, for I

him everything, and soon he was as well educated as if he had gone to school for years. Then one day Captain Ezra got another ship to com-

mand, a ship sailing to Hong Kong, loaded with fireworks, and he invited

Reub to go with him to see the world. Reub was very glad to go, indeed, and he hastly got together his things, said good-bye and went aboard

tain, "as you may as well have an interest in the voyage. You can trade them for curious things also, as we sail along among islands, isthmuses

and peninsulas, for we will strike these things all along our trip."

They sailed that afternoon and the voyage was without incident until they came to the island of Carraway, to which the strong wind had

Here they traded fireworks for carraway seeds, so useful to German bakers, and then sailed on.

taken them, for it was really far out of their course.

"I've laid in a small stock of fireworks for you to sell," said the cap-

So that was the beginning of Reub's schooling, for the cuckoo taught

"Can you come out?" asked Reub.

Reub recovered his voice and asked:
"Why didn't you call out and attract attention?"
"I cannot speak when the door is closed," replied the cuckoo. "The

near he called for Reuben and said to him:

EUBEN MOSSBACH was a boy who lived where the country came right down to the seashore, so that the hay that grew on his father's farm was salt, and the very cows and pigs were web-footed from wading in the water, while the hens could swim as well as the ducks and the little chickens had to fight with the crabs and lobsters for their food. It was nothing at all to see oysters and clams clinging to the roots of the trees after a high tide on the Mossbach farm, for the water often came even into the barn, so that they sometimes found dogfish in the dog house and catfish trying to steal the cream in the dairy, as cats will do at times. Reub used to catch porgies, grunters and sea robins, which look so much like robins that one almost expects them to sing, as well as soft shell crabs and shrimp, from his bedroom window, and sometimes he would go to bed with his fish line tied to his toe and fall asless only to be read by with his fish line tied to his toe and fall asleep, only to be waked by a bite and then ne would haul in a big fish in the middle of the night. His mother did not like to have a farm so close to the sea, for she said the milk and eggs tasted salt, but Mr. Mossbach would tell her that he would have the farm moved back a few miles next year if she would be would have the farm moved back a few miles next year it she would be patient, and then she would laugh and tell him that it was more likely that the farm would be washed out a few miles to sea instead. They did fear that sometimes when the winter waves roared almost up to the door and Mr. Mossbach had a big anchor out in the back of the house set into the ground just to guard against that very thing, but it never happened. In summer it was fine to jump off the porch right into the occan and swim around in one's front yard, as it were, and then Reub ocean and swim around in one's front yard, as it were, and then Reub and his sister Emmaline did truly enjoy life to its full. They were very happy all the time, but Reub fretted sometimes because there was no school to which he could go and learn something. He knew all that there was to know about the things that grew about the shore, whether in the water or out, but he wanted to learn all about foreign lands and people as well. as he felt that no boy can succeed without such knowledge. Every scrap of printed matter, whether an old newspaper or an almanac, was eagerly read by him, and in this way he did manage to pick up quite a lot of information, so that in truth ne was better equipped than many boys who go to school, but who make no attempt to learn and never remember what is taught them.

#### Sea Captains Would Spin Yarns

During the long winter nights, when the lamily sat around the great fireplace, old sea captains used to come in and sit with them, and many were the strange tales that Reub and Emmaline heard. Captain Ezra Hand, who, although he was now only a skipper of an oyster smack, had ce commanded a great ship which sailed to Java, Ceylon and New once commanded a great ship which sailed to Java, Ceylon and New Zealand, making voyages of many months' duration, had seen many curious things and met with many strange adventures which were related as he sat by the fire these stormy nights. To these stories Reuben listened with wide-open eyes and wished to be able to voyage to just such queer places, while his gentle little sister sat and shuddered to think of her dear brother in the hidst of such perils, for girls are such cowards about these things and fear cannibals and snakes very much, while all a boy wants is a good gun and the chance to meet them face to face Captain Watts Wesley, who came rarely, had even a greater store of wonderful tales than Captain Ezra, for which he showed greater store of wonderful tales than Captain Ezra, for which he showed testimonials, as he was tattooed from head to foot by some savages who had captured him and kept him for years, making him marry their queen and teach them how to make ropes, dance jigs and play foot-ball.

It's a wonderful thing to bear such stories with the angry sea re

right outside ane's door, for it adds to the effect immensely, so it is not to be wondered at that Mrs. Mossbach frequently was terrified at some of the tales. She was especially wrought up one evening when Captain Watts related his adventures in the land of the three Wizards of Tophet. He had been shipwrecked on the coast of that country and made his way into the interior until he came to the houses of the wizards, and he only escaped by the exercise of great eleverness from them, for they make slaves of all whom they capture and compel them to do the most wearing labor, so that they soon die from overwork. The wizards, who are called Zimm, Hamm and Duff, live a few miles apart along a road, and few escape from their clutches who are foolish enough to travel that highway, I assure you. Exactly how Captain Watts Wesley escaped them he didn't make very clear, and once in a while Reuben suspected that it was only a story and that the captain had never been near them at all. But he loved to hear the stories, however, no matter how , and the captain couldn't come too often to suit the lad.

One dark and wintry night, when the wind was roaring and whistling so hard that the weather vane on the barn fairly shrieked and the voice of the captain had to be raised to be heard above the noise of the storm outside, he was relating an adventure, when suddenly he stopped seemed to listen to something. After another moment they heard the boom of a cannon afar off at sea.

#### A Big Ship Comes Ashore

"A ship ashore!" cried the captain, springing up and darting to the door. He opened it, and again they heard the dull, faint boom. All ran out into the darkness and to the water's edge, where in another moment they saw away out at sea a flaring light burning, which told them that a ship was in distress in that awful storm. The captain ran as fast as he could to summon the life-savers, but Reuben got there first. The life-boat was slid into its carriage, the horses hitched up, and, almost as quickly as a fire engine gets away, the great boat was being hauled along the beach, while the life-savers sent up rockets to signal the ship's crew that help was coming to them. Then they shot off the big iron bolt with a cord attached, which fell across the stranded ship's deck. and soon they were hauling the people ashore in the breeches bu fast as they came ashore they were hurried to the houses nearby, where they were warmed and cared for. The last to land was the captain of the ship, and he said that there was an old man who had refused to leave the wrecked vessel and whom he had been forced to abandon. When the daylight came they could see the ship, with the white

crested waves beating clear over her, and all concluded that the po man must have perished, and they wondered why he had refused to be saved. The next day the sea was so calm that it seemed as if there had never been a storm stirring its smooth surface, and Reub launched his little sailboat and asked Emmaline to sail out to the wreck of the ship with him. He wanted to learn whether the old man was still there. Emmaline refused to go with him, however, and he sailed off alone. When be reached the ship her starboard rail was down in the water, so that he could step right aboard her from his boat, and as soon as he did so out came the old man from the hatchway, saying:

"Good morning, my lad. Have you come to take me ashore?"
"I didn't expect to find you alive," said Reub, "and I am glad that
you are. Why didn't you go ashore with the rest?"

"Because I couldn't find something which I wanted to take with me and which I would not leave behind. I found it during the night, but I had an awful job, for everything is all muddled up aboard this ship on account of the terrible tossing we've had the last three or four days."

"May I ask what it was that you couldn't leave behind?" inquired

"It is my cuckoo clock. It was left to me by my father, who got it om his father, who in turn received it from his, and I was told n to part with it."

"Is it such a precious cuckoo clock?" asked Reub. "No, I must confess that I can see no reason why it should be so valued, for it don't go, as part of its works are lost, but I must do as my dad told me," replied the aged man. "I have guarded it fifty years, and it's now a habit with me, so that I should die if I lost it. I had it in my trunk down below, and so I couldn't lay my hands on it quickly. After this I'll keep it handy, so that I won't be left again. I've been most scared to death out here and haven't had anything to eat since yester-

day morning, besides being almost frozen."

Reub helped him into his sailboat, for he was so cold and feeble that he could scarcely walk, and soon had him ashore and in front of the blasing fire eating some warm food.

#### THE WAMGOOZLE CAME DASHING UP

"We are in a strange place," said Captain Ezra. "I have never been here before, and I don't exactly know the islands here. We will sail southeast by south, and see if we can strike land in that direction." That night a storm arose and the good ship Ann Eliza Weed was driven ashore on a coast that her captain did not know, and which is not on any map, the land of Moxlean, a wild, desolate and hot shore, infested with mosquitoes and land crabs. The crew managed to save a lot of the cargo of fireworks and get them to land cafely, but the ship was lost. When morning came they started to walk inland in hopes of finding houses where they could get dry clothes and breakfast, but it was so wild and deserted that by noon they had seen nothing to show that people lived there. As they were resting in the shade of a mass of rocks they saw a great cloud of dust coming, although what caused it was invisible.

#### Approach of the Wamgoozle

Anxious to solve the puzzle, Reub opened his clock and asked the cuckoo to tell him what was approaching.

"It's the Wamgoozle," replied the bird.

"What's a Wamgoozle?" asked Reub.
"You'll see soon enough, but I'll tell you. \_t's a sort of cross between
n enormous kangaroo and a lizard, for it has a big pouch like the kangaroo, and a tall, as well as four legs, like the alligator. It will destroy us all unless you manage to delude it."

"How can we do that?"

"We will have to bamboozle the Wamgoozle, that's all," said the bird.
"It is approaching so rapidly that whatever we do we must act quickly.
It is very found of bright-colored objects, and probably if we let its eye catch the fireworks it will grab them at once. You run and put them all in a heap and strip off one of the fuses from a big pinwheel, but leave one end attached, so that if the animal puts them in his pouch you can keep hold of it."

By this time the Wamgoozle was so near that they could see its red cleaming eyes, and Reuben threw out the brilliantly-colored fireworks in a heap very hastly, indeed. The Wamgoozle came dashing up like a fire engine and stopped so suddenly at sight of the red, blue and yellow things lying there that he reared up into the air and caused so much dust to rise that he never saw all the saliors lying in the tall grass a few feet away. It quickly tucked all the fireworks into its great pouch, and was looking about to see if it had neglected any, when the cuckoo whis-

Now scratch a match and light your fuse quick, before he gets

Quick as thought he lighted a match, and then the fuse and the fire pinwheel, the Roman candles, the rockets and the giant crackers in one grand explosion that first stung, then shook and then blew up the Wamgoozle entirely. There was one great bang, and such a big hole was made in him that he just lay down and died right there

Then they marched on and soon came to a road leading south. Reub asked the cuckoo where the road led to. "It is the wizards' road," the bird replied. "It takes you past their

"Do you mean the wizards Zimm, Hamm and Duff?" asked Reub. "They are the ones. This road goes straight there and nowhere else."
"Then we had better turn back directly," said Reub.

'No, keep right'on, and when you get to the wizards' houses I'll tell

So on they went, depending upon the cuckoo, although Reub felt some bubt, and therefore said nothing to the captain of what he knew. By and by the sun grew very warm and all of the crew stretched the in the shade of trees by the roadside to wait for a cooler hour,

but Reub, by the bird's advice, went on, and very soon came to the

house of Zimm the wizard. Back of the house he could see many people

work in the fields, who, as the bird told him, were those whom the wizard had taken in his toils. Now, these wizards all had special ways

Him Evil

of catching people. Yet with all their arts and clever tricks each one depended upon some particular method, and his very existence was staked upon it. For insta Zimm asked, or rather compelled, all who passed his door to answer certain questions, or else be his slaves, but there was one question that, if it were correctly answered, would kill old Zimm in a twinkling, but he had to ask that

question of each one before he could take them. When Reub came to his house he walked up boidly to the door and knocked, and when a slave came he demanded to see Zimm, the wizard. The wizard was somewhat alarmed, for nobody had ever dared to ask for him who knew his dreadful reputation. He came to the door, and Reub said:

"I want shelter and food from you. Hurry up and ask your old questions, so as to get it all over, and then give me something to eat." Zimm was startled and alarmed, for he felt that Reub could answer all and even the last sticker of a question, so in his fright he never asked any but the very hard one that all had to answer. This it was:

"What's the difference between a menhaden, a moss-bunker and a Reub looked at him and laughed. He didn't need to as: the cucked what the answer was. Old Zimm jumped up in alarm, for he saw that

"Say," he said, "you needn't answer right away. Come in and have some lunch now and we will see about the question in the morning."
"I have some friends away down the road," said Reub, "and I'll have
to let them know."

"Go and get them," urged the wizard; "the more the merrier. I will be glad to meet all friends of such a good-looking boy as you are."

Reub hurried back to get the captain and his crew, telling them of his good luck, and they all went to lunch at the wizard's, who treated them handsomely, but every time he looked at Reub he shivered, for he felt that his time had come.

After luncheon, while they were all resting in the shade under the trees, Reub walked down the road to the house of Hamm, a mile or so farther on. Now, Hamm had another sort of question, or rather a task, that he set all comers, but if any one could do it Hamm was a goner. This was to procure him paper not made by man. I don't mean paper made by women or children, but made by other than human hands. When he told keub this the boy said, "Let me think," and went outside to do it. While he was out he left the clock on the wizard's table, and Hamm, in examining it, happened to press the knob and opened the door. Then the cukene spoke to him and said:

oor. Then the cuckoo spoke to him and said:

"It's lucky for you that you opened the door, so that I could tell you to beware of that innocent-looking boy who knows all things. Ho will surely find you the paper not made by man and you are done up!"

This scared Hamm almost to death and he began to shake. "Is he a magician?" he asked in a faint voice.

"Worse then that" said the purkers "It's for making the said the purkers."

"Worse than that," said the cuckoo. "He is a walking encyclopaedia if you know what that is." Now Hamm didn't \_now, and he was more frightened than before, so he determined to prevent Reub from thinking any more about the paper he was to find and went out to call him back

## Paper Not Made by Man

what it could be, but he was certain that there must be such a paper, so he set himself to think what it was. Just as Le was almost in despair and felt that he must ask the cuckoo to tell him (and he hated to do that), he saw a big wasp come flying along, and the answer to the problem came to him at once. Wasps, as every boy knows, make a kind of paper, of which they construct their nests, and this would comply with Wizard Hamm's demand, of course. He was smiling over his discovery when Hamm called him. Hamm was even more alarmed when he saw the boy smiling, for he felt that he had discovered the paper somehow. although there never had been a man able to do it before in all the world. He said: "Come into the house and have a glass of iced wine, for it's too hot out in the sun, dear boy. Never mind about the paper tc-day. To-morrow will do just as well. Let us enjoy to-day.

"I must go on to see Duff at once," replied Reub; "but I'll return and ne of the paper with me.

"Don't bother about it. It's immaterial, I assure you," said Hamm,

and Reub went on to the house of Duff.

Now, Duff's specialty was to dare any man who came along to do something that he couldn't do, and so far never a man had succeeded in accomplishing this. Reub entered his house without knocking, and, walking up to him, siapped him on the back and asked: "Are you the

"I am," replied the wizard; "and what do you want?" Well, I'd like to see you do some of your wonderful stants, to see

what sort of a wiz you are." "Tou are a bold boy. Do you know that unless you can surpass me and do something too difficult for me to do I will keep you as a slave?"

"Ha! that doesn't worry me a little bit," said Reub, "Wait until I do a few of my specialties and see what you have to say about the slave business. You know the penalty if you fail."

Now this sort of talk was entirely new to Duff, and it trightened him that as it did the other witcomed.

just as it did the other wizards. He looked carefully at Reub and secretly thought that he seemed very confident, too confident not to

have some wonderful feat to spring on him in order to compass his downfall.

#### Overcomes the Old Wizard

"I will not do anything at all. I refuse flatiy, and now I command you

"All right," said Reub, placing his clock with the door open on the wizard's table. "I will be back in about fifteen minutes to show it to you." Then he went out and back to Hamm's house, but while he was gone Duff looked at the clock, saw the bird and was about to take it out, but the bird spoke to him, warning him that Reub would certainly finish him off promptly, as he was a great wonder-worker, who never sh him off promptly, as he was a great wonder-worker, who never failed in anything.

On arriving at the house, Reub asked Hamm if he had any materials for making earbonic acid gas, and when the wizard said he had, he de-manded them at once. He went to work immediately and soon had made a lot of the gas, which, as perhaps you know, is much heavier than air, so that you can pour it out of a bottle into a pitcher, and there it will remain like so much water until you tip the pitcher. Then he made small water-wheel, just as he had done many a time on the farm. 2 with this in one hand and the pitcher of carbonic acid gas in the other. he hurried back to Duff.

"I am a little late," said Reub; "but I am all ready."
"There's not the least hurry," said Duff, scared half to death. "We

needn't worry about it until after supper, or perhaps to-morrow after-

"I'd rather finish it, and you, this very minute," replied Reub, "so just watch me closely and see if you can tell how I manage to pour invisible water out of this pitcher upon my little water-wheel." He tipped the pitcher over the wheel, and as the heavy gas fell up

Its biades, of course it pressed them down and the wheel began to furn, slowly at first and then rapidly, until all of the gas was emptied out of the pitcher, when the wheel slowly came to a standstill. Duff was par lyzed with amazement, for, as he had never studied chemistry, he had never heard of this simple trick, which you can do as well as Reub did with almost no trouble at all. He turned lue and green, and then

fainted away, for he knew he was done for.

Reub picked up his bird and went out and back to the house of Zimm. where we will leave him until next week, for he is quite safe WALT McDOUGALL

# JOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE ANNUAL MIGRATION OF WILD BIRDS

HE migration of birds has received much careful attention of late years. Certain well-defined arrivals and departures have been landmarks in the year from the earliest recorded times; "the stock in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the timeof their coming;" but the general character of the movement of nearly all species of birds was not suspected until systematic observations, conducted over a number of seasons at the lighthouses on the British and Irish coasts, revealed the fact that even some of our most constant feathered fellow citizens dispatched innumerable contingents to the South on the approach of winter. The lighthouse keepers are kept supplied with forms by a committee of the British Association, the men are diligent in filling hem up, noting the flocks revealed to them at night by the flare of the light, registering the dates of movement, and recording the mortality among birds flying against the lantern. That the species of these last may be verified, the wings of victims are forwarded with the reports. From the mass of information thus accumulated year by year it may be pronounced that game-birds are almost absolutely stationary, although partridge has been recorded from Heligoland; so probably may the house sparrow. demoralized by long acquaintance with the vices of town life; but rooks, jays, blackbirds, thrushes, chaffinches, even the confiding robin, and the contented little brown wren, pass in literally countless numbers from one region to another, moved by a latent, but irresistible im

#### Where An mal Life Was Born

An extreme instance of this annual migration may be found in the knot, a little wader about the size of a common snipe. Breeding so far to the north that no collection in the world contains a specimen of its egg, the knots leave the Arctic circle in the autumn, and move in vast multitudes through Europe, Asia and America, ot shunning the Bri

multitudes through Europe, Asia and America, not shuming the British Isles, and continue their leisurely journey to such prodigious limits that the advanced guard, before it turns north .gain, ha occupied China, Surinam, Brazil, South Africa and the Australasian group.

It is natural to ask why such an enormous journey should be taken, seeing that this little lird, gifted with powers of flight incomparably inferior to the swallow, is just as punctual in traversing thousands of miles as the swallow is in traveling hundreds.

The answer is still in a nebulous phase, but modern research seems to be clearing away rome of the mists. Cold is not the direct agent in regulating these mysterious movements, for birds belonging to the northern

lating these mysterious movements, for birds belonging to the northern and temperate zones have marvelous power of resisting cold, and a Spanish winter, for example, is often far more severe than an Irish one.

But cold remy be accounted the indirect cause of the southward autumnal migration, which brings some birds to the British leies and expels others.

Cold affects the food supply, destroying the insects upon which soft-billed birds depend, and burying in snow the seeds which supply the others.

Two questions suggest themselves—why is bird migration chiefly conducted during the night? and why do the locks move at such great heights as they are known to do? To the second question no satisfactory answer can be offered at present. It might be conceivable, if the move ment took place in daylight, that ground-loving birds like robins, thrushes, and other common objects of the lawn migh, ascend hundreds of feet in order to obtain a "bird's-eye view" of the landscape. But migrant birds fly chiefly in the darkness, out of which they descend, many of them to their destruction, when attracted by strong lights. Possibly they are obeying an instinct which warns them against hawks, owls and gulls, chiefly to be encountered in the ower strata of atmos phere, and in this also is to be found the probable explanation why day.

### Some Remarkably Long Flights

But then, it may be asked, why don't birds remain and breed in the regions where food is always to be found? There are always plenty of lapwings in England in winter, and they find abundant provender: why should English-bred lapwings take the trouble to travel all the way to the Danube or Morocco, in order to have their places taken by flights bred in Scandinavia and Iceland? That brings us to one of the most suggestive aspects of the phenomenon of bird migration. Every species of bird in the northern hemisphere, except the sedentary game fowls-grouse, pheasant, partridge and the like-move to the northern limit of their annual migration to nest. Take that characteristic in conjunction with the notorious and invincible impulse of every bird to return to its birthplace to rest, and you will incline to the conclusion that bird life had its origin in high latitudes. Adopt that conclusion, and you will be tempted a little further. You will not dismiss with an incredulous smile the opinion of those who perceive in the Polar Circle the cradle of terrestrial life. If the earth, as there is reason to suppose, vast ages ago were a mass of incandescent matter, it would be at the poles where it would first cool down-at the poles where an endurable climate would first prevail. A tropical climate at first, of which there is abundant evidence penetrate the frozen surface layers, you come upon rocks yielding remains of tree ferns and giant mares-tails-plants that could only exist In a hot, steaming atmosphere. As the cooling process went on, the winter cold about the poles forced these tropical growths into a zone which gradually parted with enough heat to receive them.